

Meeting Highlights | March 22, 2007

Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management Plan Basin Advisory Panel

Meeting Overview

- The Panel discussed a proposed framework for the monitoring program. Additional comments are due April 6. (Send to Tim Parker, Bill Keene or Gina Bartlett.) The work group will meet one more time to review the revised framework. The Panel will review it at the May 2007 meeting and begin prioritizing the program elements.
- Some Panel members will need to volunteer to serve on a technical advisory committee to review and provide feedback on text of the groundwater management plan.

Next Meeting

Thursday, April 26, 2007, 2:00-5:30, Sonoma Community Center

Monitoring Program

The Basin Advisory Panel provided feedback on the monitoring program framework developed by the Monitoring Work Group in February and March.

Background: Steps to Develop the Program

The Panel identified issues and concerns during its January discussion. The work group held three meetings in February and March discussing existing monitoring efforts, monitoring needs, voluntary programs, GIS issues, and specific opportunities, such as potential wells to include in the voluntary program. To develop the monitoring program, the work group considered all the issues identified by the Panel and work group. In May and June, the Panel will develop criteria to prioritize implementation of the monitoring program. The goal of the monitoring work group is to include as much detail on monitoring program elements as is possible and work with the Panel to prioritize which elements will be implemented first, given resource constraints.

Feedback on the Monitoring Program Framework

Recharge Areas and Land Use

The Panel felt that the monitoring program should further study recharge areas. The Panel would like to monitor land use, drainage and run-off in recharge areas. One option is to have a specific study on recharge to understand where recharge is occurring. However, the Panel expressed interest in identifying recharge areas and monitoring of land use in those recharge areas to see how the land use might change over time. Another option for the Panel to consider is some sort of recommendation that ties recharge areas to land use zoning decisions. The Panel can discuss that during the implementation phase of the plan.

Document Improvements

Panel members recommended the following suggestions on the monitoring program framework.

- Add why we are monitoring to the introductory text. Clarify that monitoring depends on the objectives of the groundwater management program. What is the monitoring program trying to measure? What is it NOT?

- Provide some explanation of the value of data from alluvial areas and bedrock.
- Maps are helpful. Add cones of depression on the map.
- Add volunteer information.
- Under groundwater elevation monitoring, section 2 on needs, add the Regional Park / Sonoma Development Center.
- Under data management, specify volunteer protocols and privacy issues. Clarify how data will be used.
- Prioritization criteria: add stream gage and recharge areas.
- Data gaps should be documented, including related, needed studies; recharge areas; and the seepage study.

Basin Management Goal & Objectives

A small group of Panel members provided a revised goal statement for the Panel to review.

The goal of the Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management is to locally manage, protect, and enhance groundwater resources for all beneficial uses, in a sustainable, environmentally sound, economical, and equitable manner for generations to come.

“Equitable” means that one cannot use groundwater to detriment of another; disadvantaged groups are not negatively affected; one group doesn’t benefit at the expense of others. Panel members, who were present, after some discussion, were mostly comfortable with this goal statement.

The Panel also reviewed a list of objectives. The Panel will continue discussing the objectives at its next meeting. The Panel agreed that the following should be added to the objectives:

- Decrease dependence on groundwater (Panel concurred that this should be included)
- Explore, identify, and maximize non-regulatory approaches (Panel concurred that this should be included)

These concerns require additional Panel discussion:

- Balance use of water resources
- Maintain groundwater elevations that support all beneficial uses of groundwater
- Consider objective to advocate protecting recharge areas

Meetings in 2007

April 26
May 31
June 28
July 26

September 27
Oct 25
Nov 29